

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T COLOMBO 001619

SIPDIS

NOFORN

NEW DELHI ALSO FOR LEGATT AND USCUSTOMS: JDOZIER, GRISING
AND KSTEPHENSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/12/2015

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [CVIS](#) [EWWT](#) [CE](#) [AS](#) [LTTE](#)

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIANS INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE LTTE ATTEMPT TO
PURCHASE SHIP IN AUSTRALIA

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Jeffrey J. Lunstead
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (S/NF) We have been advised by the Australian High Commission here in Colombo that it has alerted authorities in Canberra to what appears to be an effort by a front company of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) to purchase a small cargo ship in Australia. Without sharing full details with us, our Australian colleagues have told us that the matter came to light as a result of coordination between their immigration and commercial sections and that some Sri Lankan "political figures" (including a Muslim member of Parliament from the opposition United National Party) may be involved. The matter is now under investigation by Australian law enforcement agencies. The Australians tell us they have been coordinating this with Sri Lankan intelligence agencies.

12. (S/NF) The name of what the Australians call the "pseudo-LTTE shipping company" is Liverpool Navigation Ltd. located at 286 B 1/1, Galle Road, Colombo 03, Sri Lanka. The vessel in question is the "ITAC Express," a "general cargo-CGO" which has a dead weight of 2181 metric tons and a draft of 4.6 meters. It was built in 1970 in Adelaide. According to "intelligence," the Australians believe the LTTE intends to register the ship in Cambodia.

13. (S/NF) The vessel was inspected in Cairns on August 14, 2005 by two "officials" of Liverpool Navigations. They are:

-- Mr. Sathasivam Vincendrarajan (Chairman), DOB January 31, 1966, Sri Lankan passport number N140022, residing at 26/1 Alfred Place, Colombo 03 Sri Lanka

-- Mr. Carlton Hariharan Francis Xavier (General Manager/Technical), DOB December 7, 1960, Sri Lankan passport number N1456577, residing at 30B Nimal Road, Colombo 04 Sri Lanka

14. (S/NF) Comment: This apparent purchase fits the longstanding pattern of LTTE use of aged cargo vessels both for their cargo business and for shipment of weapons and supplies into LTTE-controlled areas in the North and the East. The Australians here tell us that, in their interactions with the Sri Lankan government, the intelligence agencies wanted the sale to go forward so that the ship, its owners and crew and its activities could be tracked and, perhaps, information gleaned about the LTTE overseas procurement network. A political decision was made (the Australians imply by President Kumaratunga), however, to work with the Australians to prevent the purchase from taking place. We will stay in touch with the Australians here about this issue, which comes at a time when the Australians are also considering, in the wake of the August 12 LTTE murder of the Sri Lankan foreign minister, whether to issue a visa to a senior member of the LTTE-linked political party, the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), who wishes to attend meetings in Australia in October. Regarding visas, post Visas Viper committee will consider the two gentlemen (as well as any other names that arise as the matter unfolds further) in paragraph three for inclusion at its next meeting.

LUNSTEAD